

THE STATUS REPORT

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MCSW RELEASES "STATE OF MA WOMEN BY COUNTY" REPORT

Key information on how the women of Massachusetts are faring by county was released this week when the Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women issued its "*State of Women: A County by County Report on Women and Girls in Massachusetts*," at the State House.

The event was attended by over 100 people, including Senators Susan Fargo and Pamela Resor and Representatives Kathleen Teahan, Cory Atkins, Jennifer Callahan, Mary Grant, Anne Paulsen, Harriett Stanley, Ellen Story, and Marie St. Fleur. Representative Teahan, in her role as the Co-Chair of the Massachusetts Women Legislative Caucus, spoke early in the program, commending the MCSW on the essential value of the report and its usefulness to legislators.

State of Women is a thorough compilation of the most currently available data on Massachusetts women and girls and offers invaluable county level information, which has not been previously compiled collectively.

The State of Women report is based on "The Status of Women by County" research guide created by the National Institute for Women's Policy Research. The model, which builds off the success of the IWPR's national "Status of Women" reports (including the one published in 2002 for MA), includes a comprehensive framework to showcase data by county on key women's issues.

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Second Annual Massachusetts Conference for Women Coming December 6th

Over 4,000 women are expected to attend the second annual Massachusetts Conference for Women (www.maconferenceforwomen.org) on December 6 at the Boston Convention & Exhibition Center. The MCSW is pleased to be the lead co-sponsor of this important event.

This exciting, one-day event is an opportunity for women to learn, be inspired and motivated and make important new connections of benefit to themselves, their businesses and their careers. Nationally known speakers and media personalities will be featured together with an outstanding array of seminars. And more than 100 vendors will be onsite to showcase their products and services geared toward women.

Keynote speakers include Dr. Maya Angelou and Iman. Dr. Maya Angelou, who will address attendees at the Luncheon Keynote Session, is hailed as one of the great voices of contemporary literature. Known as an accomplished poet, educator, historian, author of twelve best-selling books, actress, playwright, civil-rights activist, producer and director, Dr. Angelou is the second poet in U.S. history to have written and recited original work at a presidential Inauguration.



Dr. Maya Angelou

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Executive Director Corner

All of us at the MCSW hope that you and yours had a joyous, restful and reflective Thanksgiving. Here are some of the things I'm feeling thankful for:

Our Appointing Authorities – The Commission is populated by four sources: the Governor, the Senate President, the Speaker of the House and the Caucus of Women Legislators. We appreciate the support of all of our AAs and thank them for sending us the remarkable women who are the MA Commission on the Status of Women. We are also grateful to them, and the entire state legislature, for providing the annual fiscal resources that we need to do our work.

Commissioners – I have the privilege and pleasure of working with 19 extremely talented, interesting and committed women who voluntarily give their valuable time, expertise and energy to work for the good of the women of Massachusetts. We are engaged in important, meaningful, substantive work and I am proud of the progress we are achieving on behalf of our important constituency – the Commonwealth's 3.3 million women. I also appreciate the growing interest that is being shown in becoming part of this Commission – we have received many applications from many diverse women to join us in our mission. While we do not currently have any vacancies on the Commission, it is very helpful to have a feeder network developing so that we are prepared when seats open up.

Staff – I am blessed to work with such a caring and committed team who consistently go above and beyond to accomplish our goals. It never ceases to amaze me what our small group is able to produce through sheer determination, dedication, and persistence.

Collaboration – This year in particular there is a true spirit of collegial collaboration between those engaged in women's work and issues. The result is integrated efforts, improved communication and forward movement on many fronts. This bears out our belief that "Alone we do good things, together we achieve great things!" We are thankful to all who have joined with us and that we have worked with to address our common areas of concern.

All of us at the MCSW hope that you, your family and friends take the time to enjoy the wonderful holiday season ahead of us.

Linda Brantley



Pictured above L to R: MCSW Commissioners Linda Cavaoli; Helen Jackson, MD; Catherine Greene, Gloria Coney; Greer Swiston; Chair Elizabeth Houlihan; and at the podium, Linda Brantley, MCSW Executive Director.



Pictured above L to R: Marie Turley, Executive Director of Boston Women's Commission; Rep. Kathleen Teahan; Rep. Anne Paulsen; Rep. Marie St. Fleur; Rep. Ellen Story; and Grace Ross

MCSW COMMISSIONER SPOTLIGHT

EDITORS NOTE: The "Commissioner Spotlight" is a new feature that will each month profile one of our Commissioners.

Elizabeth H. Houlihan is the newly elected chair of the Commission. She is the President and Owner of E. H. Houlihan & Associates, an executive search and business consulting firm. Previously, she was the Chief Operating Officer for CO Space, Inc., in Burlington, MA. Her 27 year career at Nynex (now known as Verizon), included a number of Senior Management positions the most recent being Vice President - Consumer Sales & Service for New York and New England and Vice President / General Manager of Operations for Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Western MA and Rhode Island. Additionally, Mrs. Houlihan has held public, private and not-for-profit board seats. She received the YWCA 1993 Women's Achievement Award in New York City. Mrs. Houlihan believes "women working together for a common purpose can accomplish anything."



Elizabeth Houlihan

- **How did you hear about the Commission?**

In 2002, I met former MCSW Commissioner Elaine Guiney, who was Vice-Chair of the Commission at that time. She encouraged me to put my leadership skills to work for the Commission by seeking an appointment. Although I was interested in the group's mission, at that time I was not able to do so.

- **Why did you want to volunteer for the Commission?**

Two years later, I met with Helen Corbett and the new MCSW Executive Director Linda Brantley. Helen and Linda spoke of the Commission and the yet to be realized potential they both felt it had to do more for women in the Commonwealth. Once again I was asked to seek appointment to the Commission to help bring new energy and a more visible action agenda to the MCSW.

I was very interested and the time was right for me. I seized the opportunity to get involved and was appointed to the MCSW by the Massachusetts Women's Legislative Caucus.



- **You were recently elected Chair of the Commission; what do you hope to accomplish?**

Last year I served as Vice-Chair of the Commission, and I was actively involved in directing the Unsung Heroine's Initiative and the MCSW Luncheon, both of which brought increased recognition to the MCSW. In my new role as Chair, I am eager to enhance the work that has been started and work together as a team with all Commissioners to do more and to do it better. The MCSW has great potential to be a positive force for all Massachusetts women.

- **What do you hope the Commission will accomplish?**

The Commission is made up of 19 diverse incredible women from all walks of life. I would like all Commission members to work together with a level of energy that will raise not only MCSW's statewide visibility but its demonstrated achievements as well. The Commission can be a valuable resource for women if we address the many issues that affect them. It is my hope that during my term the MCSW will strive to make a difference for all women of the Commonwealth.

Pictured from L - R, are Donna Cupelo, Region President MA/RI Verizon Communications; Elizabeth Houlihan, MCSW Chair; Ellen Corcoran, General Manager Verizon NE Region; Seated: Cheryl Mongell, President Verizon Market Area

Commission Corner

The MCSW Handbook for Developing Women's Commissions is Now Available

Anyone interested in starting a women's commission in their community now has an invaluable resource available to them with the publication of the MCSW's *Handbook for Developing Women's Commissions*. The MCSW is pleased to be able to offer this tool, which was developed in response to demand, primarily through the dedication and efforts of Boston University student and MCSW intern, Rheanne Wirkkala.

"There is growing interest in creating women's commissions, both at the municipal and county level, in Massachusetts," noted MCSW Executive Director Linda Brantley. "We were at a loss for good information and background to share, so felt it was necessary to create this *Handbook for Developing Women's Commissions* to serve as a resource. We also believe it will be useful to existing Commissions in terms of augmenting their operations and increasing their effectiveness."

The Handbook is modeled after a dated version originally created by the National Association of Commissions on Women. The new handbook has been forwarded to NACW for use by emerging and existing women's commissions nationwide.

The handbook contains both narrative as well as an extensive array of model materials which can be easily adapted. Copies of the handbook are available online at www.mass.gov/women or by contacting the Commission office.

Meet MCSW's Fall Interns

The MCSW would like to congratulate Elise Wang, a senior at Harvard University, for having just been chosen to be a Rhodes Scholar!

Maggie Brunner is a junior at Tufts University where she majors in American History. Specifically, she is interested in exploring the histories of underrepresented populations. Maggie will pick up the research of Jessie Anderson, also a Tufts student, and Sally Pendergast, two summer interns who collected data for *State of Women: A County By County Report on Women and Girls in Massachusetts*. Maggie will sort and format the data for presentation to constituents, women's organizations and elected officials.

Lucinda Kallis-Hilbert, a graduate of Lesley University, is currently enrolled in the Program for Women and Politics and Public Policy at the McCormack School of Government, UMass Boston. After graduation Lucinda lived and traveled abroad in France, she returned to Boston to continue her studies and explored her interest in political advocacy. During the course of the academic year, Lucinda will support the work of the Legislative and Public Policy Committee through legislative research and advisory.

Aliza Krevolin is a senior at Brandeis University where she majors in sociology and history. Aliza was the first to join the internship program this fall and since that time has exhibited a wonderful eagerness. She has taken on the responsibility of helping to implement the MCSW's statewide Regional Councils and public hearings. In addition, she is stewarding the revisions to the newly created Handbook for New Women's Commissions.

Elise Wang is a senior at Harvard University where she majors in women, gender and sexuality and comparative religion. Her senior thesis will explore modern representation of pre-modern Chinese women with a focus on religion and gender. While Elise is at the MCSW she will work mostly independently to develop a legal handbook for women. We are incredibly proud of Elise for having just been chosen to be a Rhodes Scholar. She will be studying in Oxford University in England for the next two years on full scholarship.

Visit: www.mcswnetwork.com

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"When we released our first major piece of research at the end of 2004, *Real Cuts – Real People – Real Pain: The Effects of the Fiscal Crisis on Women & Girls of Massachusetts*, we quickly learned of the desire for female specific data. Furthermore, while the statewide overview was appreciated, in addition most wanted information that was specific to their part of the state. We are proud to provide this vital information in response to the recognized need," explained MCSW Executive Director Linda Brantley.

"We have developed a resource that we hope will serve as a spring board for future legislation, public policy and ultimately positive change for the women of Massachusetts. We also hope it will provide a platform for discussion on what more we may want to know about the women of Massachusetts and catalyze future research initiatives on women and girls in Massachusetts," Brantley added.

The program, hosted by the MCSW Chair Elizabeth Houlihan, included Lincoln Filene Professor Molly Mead from the Jonathan M. Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service, Tufts University, who noted that in order to affect change for women it is important to identify and quantify the areas of persistent inequalities. She provided examples of how researchers have come to better understand the impact of race and gender and commended the MCSW for augmenting this body of research.

Highlights from the report were provided by MCSW Commissioners Linda Cavaoli, Gloria Coney, Catherine Greene, Dr. Helen Jackson, and Susana Segat. Also, Kate Fentress from the Southeastern Massachusetts Women's Fund, spoke about the practical uses of the report and noted the work her organization is spearheading in conjunction with UMass Dartmouth to augment the report, which includes an additional survey of Bristol County's urban areas.

The MCSW is grateful to the contributions of many who made the "State of Women" possible: Professor Molly Mead, her graduate students Audra Ladd and Bobbie Peyton, and MCSW interns Jessica Anderson, Tufts University, and Sally Pendergast, of Connecticut College, under the guidance of MCSW Outreach Coordinator Jill Ashton.



Pictured at left, from L to R: Rachel Kolb, Kate Fentress, and Elizabeth Houlihan, Photo taken at the Nov. 29th "State of Women" report release.

Conference for Women Continued from page 1

Iman, who will address attendees at the morning Keynote Session, is known for challenging the prevailing notions of beauty and becoming the first black international supermodel from Northeast Africa to revolutionize the look of American fashion. She is the Founder and CEO of IMAN Cosmetics and author of bestselling books *I AM IMAN* and *THE BEAUTY OF COLOR: The Ultimate Beauty Guide for Skin of Color*.

Several other speakers will be on hand, including MCSW Commissioner Dr. Roseanna H. Means, founder and president of Women of Means, Inc., a non-profit organization of sixteen volunteer physicians and six paid nurse case managers who provide free medical care and medical care access for homeless and battered women and families in 12 local shelters. Dr. Means has also written and lectured extensively on issues pertaining to homelessness.

It is not too late to register, but time is running out! Go to the Web site and register now. Students may register at a discounted rate of only \$50, but they must fax a copy of their current student ID to (877) 419-9899 within 3 days of registering online.

Major sponsors of this conference include Xerox, The Boston Globe, Boston Scientific, Bank of America, Canyon Ranch, NECN, and Raytheon.

MCSW Begins Statewide Public Hearings on Pay Equity

The MCSW, in collaboration with The Massachusetts Coalition for Women's Wage Equality, held the first of a series of statewide public hearings to gain personal stories and testimony from women who have been affected by wage inequities on November 15th at the YWCA of Central Massachusetts in Worcester.

The MCSW is committed to advancing Massachusetts women to pay equity. The public hearings seek to gather woman's personal experiences to bolster legislation or other remedies that may be pursued.

Annie Houle, national director of The WAGE Project which was established to end wage discrimination against women in the work place, opened the hearing by providing an overview of the issue. The WAGE Project was founded in 2005 by Evelyn Murphy, PhD., who is the author of *Getting Even: Why Women Don't Get Paid Like Men & What To Do About It*. Senator Harriette Chandler of Worcester offered personal testimony and informed all present about planned legislative action to address pay equity in the public sector.

In addition to giving women an opportunity to share their experiences, the hearings include an educational component and provide information on pay equality. All participants were provided with a Wage survey they could be filled out anonymously. The survey can be found on our website at www.mass.gov/women, and we would encourage you to fill one out and submit it. The next hearing will be held on Wednesday, January 17th from 5:30-7p.m. at the Western Massachusetts YWCA in Springfield, MA. Other hearings are also being planned by members of the The Massachusetts Coalition for Women's Wage Equality - watch the MCSW online calendar for additional dates as they become available.



Pictured L to R: Linda Brantley, MCSW Executive Director; Senator Harriette Chandler, Annie Houle, and MCSW Commissioners Linda Cavaoli and Chair Elizabeth Houlihan

Other Noteworthy News: November is American Diabetes Month!

Nearly 21 million children and adults -- including 9.7 million women -- in the U.S. have diabetes, a serious disease that affects the body's ability to produce or respond properly to insulin, a hormone that allows blood glucose (sugar) to enter the cells of the body and be used for energy. It is the fifth deadliest disease in the U.S. and it has no cure.

Diabetes and Women:

Diabetes can be especially tough on women. The burden of diabetes on women is unique, because the disease can affect both mothers and their unborn children. Diabetes can cause difficulties during pregnancy such as a miscarriage or a baby born with birth defects. Women with diabetes are also more likely to have a heart attack, and at a younger age, than women without diabetes. Alarmingly, almost one third of women who have diabetes do not know it.

For women who do not currently have diabetes, pregnancy brings the risk of gestational diabetes. Gestational diabetes develops in 2% to 5% of all pregnancies but disappears when a pregnancy is over. Women who have had gestational diabetes or have given birth to a baby weighting more than 9 pounds are at an increased risk for developing type 2 diabetes later in life.

The prevalence of diabetes is at least 2-4 times higher among African American, Hispanic/Latino, American Indian, and Asian/Pacific Islander women than among white women. The risk for diabetes also increases with age. Because of the increasing lifespan of women and the rapid growth of minority populations, the number of women in the United States at high risk for diabetes and its complications is increasing.

ADA's Women and Diabetes Workgroup:

Because of the significant impact diabetes has on women, the American Diabetes Association created the Women and Diabetes Workgroup. Its mission is to represent, involve, and affect all women in its efforts to prevent and cure diabetes and improve the lives of people affected by this disease. This will be accomplished through gender and culturally tailored strategies to direct the Association's activities and through targeted research, information, and advocacy efforts. For more information visit www.diabetes.org.

Upcoming Noteworthy Events & Happenings

December 6, 2006 → Massachusetts Conference for Women (Registration is now open!)
For more information visit: www.maconferenceforwomen.org

December 13, 2006, → Suffolk-Norfolk Regional Council Meeting, 3:00-4:30 p.m.
To be held at the YWCA, Boston, MA. To RSVP, or for more information,
call the Commission office at 617-626-6520

January 17, 3:30-5:00 p.m. Hampden Regional Council Meeting
To be held at the YWCA, Springfield, MA.

January 17, 5:30-7:00 p.m. Public Hearing
To be held at the YWCA, Springfield, MA.

January 24, 3:30-5:00 p.m. Essex Regional Council Meeting
To be held at the YWCA, Newburyport, MA.



Save - the - Date: March 8, 2007 International Women's Day Event, 7:30-9:00 am at Simmons College
For a complete listing of events please visit www.mass.gov/women/upcoming.htm

If you have an event that you would like added to future newsletters, or Web site, please e-mail the information to: Paula.Daddona@state.ma.us

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